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(54) PROCESS FOR PRODUCING L-LYSINE

(57) The L-lysine-producing ability and the L-lysine-producing speed are improved in a coryneform bacterium harboring an aspartokinase in which feedback inhibition by L-lysine and L-threonine is substantially desensitized, by successively enhancing DNA coding for a dihydrodipicolinate reductase, DNA coding for a dihydrodipicolinate synthase, DNA coding for a diaminopimelate decarboxylase, and DNA coding for a diaminopimelate dehydrogenase.

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The mutant lysC used in the present invention is not specifically limited provided that it codes for AK in which synergistic feedback inhibition by L-lysine and L-threonine is desensitized. However, the mutant lysC is exemplified by one including mutation in which a 279th alanine residue as counted from the N-terminal is changed into an amino acid residue other than alanine and other than acidic amino acid in the α-subunit, and a 30th alanine residue is changed into an amino acid residue other than alanine and other than acidic amino acid in the β-subunit in the amino acid sequence of the wild type AK. The amino acid sequence of the wild type AK specifically includes the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5 in Sequence Listing as the α-subunit, and the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 7 in Sequence Listing as the β-subunit.

Those preferred as the amino acid residue other than alanine and other than acidic amino acid include threonine, arginine, cyteine, phenylanaline, proline, serine, tyrosine, and valine residues.

The codon corresponding to an amino acid residue to be substituted is not specifically limited for its type provided that it codes for the amino acid residue. It is assumed that the amino acid sequence of possessed wild type AK may slightly differ depending on the difference in bacterial species and bacterial strains. AK's, which have mutation based on, for example, substitution, deletion, or insertion of one or more amino acid residues at one or more positions irrelevant to the enzyme activity as described above, can be also used for the present invention. Other AK's, which have mutation based on, for example, substitution, deletion, or insertion of other one or more amino acid residues, can be also used provided that no influence is substantially exerted on the AK activity, and on the desensitization of synergistic feedback inhibition by L-lysine and L-threonine.

An AJ12691 strain obtained by introducing a mutant lysC plasmid p399AK9B into an AJ12036 strain (FERM BP-734)as a wild type strain of Brevibacterium lactofermentum has been deposited on April 10, 1992 under a deposition number of FERM P-12918 in National Institute of Bioscience and Human Technology of Agency of Industrial Science and Technology of Ministry of International Trade and Industry (postal code: 305, 1-3, Higashi 1-chome, Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki-ken, Japan), transferred to international deposition based on the Budapest Treaty on February 10, 1995, and deposited under a deposition number of FERM BP-4999.

(2) Preparation of dapB

A DNA fragment containing dapB can be prepared from chromosome of a coryneform bacterium by means of PCR. The DNA donor is not specifically limited, however, it is exemplified by Brevibacterium lactofermentum ATCC 13869 strain.

A DNA sequence coding for DDPR is known for Brevibacterium lactofermentum (Journal of Bacteriology, 175(9), 2743-2749 (1993)), on the basis of which DNA primers for PCR can be prepared. Such DNA primers are specifically exemplified by DNA's of 23-mers respectively having nucleotide sequences depicted in SEQ ID NOs: 8 and 9 in Sequence Listing. Synthesis of DNA, PCR, and preparation of a plasmid containing obtained dapB can be performed in the same manner as those for lysC described above.

A nucleotide sequence of a DNA fragment containing dapB and an amino acid sequence deduced from the nucleotide sequence are illustrated in SEQ ID NO: 10. Only the amino acid sequence is shown in SEQ ID NO: 11. In addition to DNA fragments coding for this amino acid sequence, the present invention can equivalently use DNA fragments coding for amino acid sequences substantially the same as the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 11, namely amino acid sequences having mutation based on, for example, substitution, deletion, or insertion of one or more amino acids provided that there is no substantial influence on the DDPR activity.

A transformant strain AJ13107 obtained by introducing a plasmid pCRDAPB containing dapB obtained in Example described later on into E. coli JM109 strain has been internationally deposited since May 26, 1995 under a deposition number of FERM BP-5114 in National Institute of Bioscience and Human Technology of Agency of Industrial Science and Technology of Ministry of International Trade and Industry (postal code: 305, 1-3, Higashi 1-chome, Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki-ken, Japan) based on the Budapest Treaty.

(3) Preparation of dapA

A DNA fragment containing dapA can be prepared from chromosome of a coryneform bacterium by means of PCR. The DNA donor is not specifically limited, however, it is exemplified by Brevibacterium lactofermentum ATCC 13869 strain.

A DNA sequence coding for DDPS is known for Corynebacterium glutamicum (see Nucleic Acids Research, 18(21), 6421 (1990); EMBL accession No. X53993), on the basis of which DNA primers for PCR can be prepared. Such DNA primers are specifically exemplified by DNA's of 23-mers respectively having nucleotide sequences depicted in SEQ ID NOs: 12 and 13 in Sequence Listing. Synthesis of DNA, PCR, and preparation of a plasmid containing obtained dapA can be performed in the same manner as those for lysC described above.

A nucleotide sequence of a DNA fragment containing dapA and an amino acid sequence deduced from the nucle-

otide sequence are exemplified in SEQ ID NO: 14. Only the amino acid sequence is shown in SEQ ID NO: 15. In addition to DNA fragments coding for this amino acid sequence, the present invention can equivalently use DNA fragments coding for amino acid sequences substantially the same as the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 15, namely amino acid sequences having mutation based on, for example, substitution, deletion, or insertion of one or more amino acids provided that there is no substantial influence on the DDPS activity.

A transformant strain AJ13106 obtained by introducing a plasmid pCRDAPA containing dapA obtained in Example described later on into E. coli JM109 strain has been internationally deposited since May 26, 1995 under a deposition number of FERM BP-5113 in National Institute of Bioscience and Human Technology of Agency of Industrial Science and Technology of Ministry of International Trade and Industry (postal code: 305, 1-3, Higashi 1-chome, Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki-ken, Japan) based on the Budapest Treaty.

(4) Preparation of lysA

A DNA fragment containing lysA can be prepared from chromosome of a coryneform bacterium by means of PCR. The DNA donor is not specifically limited, however, it is exemplified by Brevibacterium lactofermentum ATCC 13869 strain.

In the coryneform bacteria, lysA forms an operon together with argS (arginyl-tRNA synthase gene), and lysA exists downstream from argS. Expression of lysA is regulated by a promoter existing upstream from argS (see Journal of Bacteriology, Nov., 7356-7362 (1993)). DNA sequences of these genes are known for Corynebacterium glutamicum (see Molecular Microbiology, 4(11), 1819-1830 (1990); Molecular and General Genetics, 212, 112-119 (1988)), on the basis of which DNA primers for PCR can be prepared. Such DNA primers are specifically exemplified by DNA's of 23-mers respectively having nucleotide sequences shown in SEQ ID NO: 16 in Sequence Listing (corresponding to nucleotide numbers 11 to 33 in a nucleotide sequence described in Molecular Microbiology, 4(11), 1819-1830 (1990)) and SEQ ID NO: 17 (corresponding to nucleotide numbers 1370 to 1392 in a nucleotide sequence described in Molecular and General Genetics, 212, 112-119 (1988)). Synthesis of DNA, PCR, and preparation of a plasmid containing obtained lysA can be performed in the same manner as those for lysC described above.

In Example described later on, a DNA fragment containing a promoter, argS, and lysA was used in order to enhance lysA. However, argS is not essential for the present invention. It is allowable to use a DNA fragment in which lysA is ligated just downstream from a promoter.

A nucleotide sequence of a DNA fragment containing argS and lysA, and an amino acid sequence deduced to be encoded by the nucleotide sequence are exemplified in SEQ ID NO: 18. An example of an amino acid sequence encoded by argS is shown in SEQ ID NO: 19, and an example of an amino acid sequence encoded by lysA is shown in SEQ ID NO: 20. In addition to DNA fragments coding for these amino acid sequences, the present invention can equivalently use DNA fragments coding for amino acid sequences substantially the same as the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 20, namely amino acid sequences having mutation based on, for example, substitution, deletion, or insertion of one or more amino acids provided that there is no substantial influence on the DDC activity.

(5) Preparation of ddh

A DNA fragment containing ddh can be prepared from chromosome of a coryneform bacterium by means of PCR. The DNA donor is not specifically limited, however, it is exemplified by Brevibacterium lactofermentum ATCC 13869 strain.

A DDH gene is known for Corynebacterium glutamicum (Ishino, S. et al., Nucleic Acids Res., 15, 3917 (1987)), on the basis of which primers for PCR can be prepared. Such DNA primers are specifically exemplified by DNA's of 20-mers respectively having nucleotide sequences depicted in SEQ ID NOs: 21 and 22 in Sequence Listing. Synthesis of DNA, PCR, and preparation of a plasmid containing obtained ddh can be performed in the same manner as those for lysC described above.

A nucleotide sequence of a DNA fragment containing ddh and an amino acid sequence deduced from the nucleotide sequence are illustrated in SEQ ID NO: 23. Only the amino acid sequence is shown in SEQ ID NO: 24. In addition to DNA fragments coding for this amino acid sequence, the present invention can equivalently use DNA fragments coding for amino acid sequences substantially the same as the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 24, namely amino acid sequences having mutation based on, for example, substitution, deletion, or insertion of one or more amino acids provided that there is no substantial influence on the DDH activity.

(2) Recombinant DNA and coryneform bacterium of the present invention

The coryneform bacterium of the present invention harbors an aspartokinase (mutant AK) in which feedback inhibition by L-lysine and L-threonine is substantially desensitized, wherein DNA (dapB) coding for a dihydrodipicolinate